

# The unrelenting existence of the hindu caste system essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The wickedness of Girdharilal Maurya are many, his aggressors insisted. He has bad karma. Look, he is a leatherworker, and Hindu jurisprudence says that working with carnal teguments makes him dirty, person to avoid and vilify. And his indecent prosperity is a wickedness. Who does this Untouchable think he is, purchasing a little secret plan of land outside the small town? Then he dared talk up, to the constabulary and other governments, demanding to utilize the new small town well.

One dark, while Maurya was off in a nearby metropolis, eight work forces from the higher Rajput caste came to his farm. They broke his fencings, stole his tractor, crush his married woman and girl, and burned down his house. The message was clear: Stay at the underside where you belong.

- An extract from the article Untouchable by Tom O'Neill

The caste system is officially defined as a " hierarchy of endogamic divisions in which rank is familial and lasting. " Membership in a specific caste determines the individual ' s profession, lifestyle and societal position throughout life. The unequal distribution of chances, which occur within the caste system, is rooted from a caste member ' s desire to remain pure. Therefore, he avoids pollution by avoiding any signifier of contact with anyone of a higher, and more frequently, a lower rank. As G. K. Gokhale, Jesus in the Dalit by M. R. Arulraja, would hold described it, " we may touch a cat, we may touch a Canis familiaris, we may touch any other animate being, but the touch of these human existences is pollution. "

A alone facet of this system is its intricate ties with the faith of 80 % of the Indian population: Hindooism. In Hinduism, all work forces are non born  
<https://assignbuster.com/the-unrelenting-existence-of-the-hindu-caste-system-essay/>

equal and are reborn into a life that is a consequence of their karma.

Supporting these beliefs is the narrative of the four chief groups, or Varnas, which were said to hold emerged from the aboriginal being known as Purush. The first category called the Brahmins were said to hold emerged from the caput or oral cavity. This caste is comprised of priests, instructors and those whose callings involve cognition. The 2nd group involved those born from the weaponries, viz. the defenders and soldiers, or Kshatriyas. The 3rd group, the Vaisyas, evolved from the thighs. Their businesss are in the Fieldss of agribusiness and trade. Finally, the last category said to hold evolved from this being are the slaves, labourers and provincials ( Sudras ) who are said to hold come from the pess.

Here lies the inquiry about where the 5th group is said to hold emerged from. Since the aboriginal being purportedly does non claim them, members of the 5th group are deemed to be castawaies, excessively friendless to be ranked as worthy existences ; hence they are called the Untouchables or the Dalits.

The reply is simple yet it explains the favoritism against them ; the Untouchables are excluded from the Varna system because of their dross, as they are ' broken work forces ' and possess the profaning wont of eating beef. A 6th of India ' s population bears the rubric of an untouchable whose lives are confined to debasement and humiliation. The Dalits are literally segregated from rural Indian society in mundane life ; they are forced to populate in countries outside small towns. They by and large live in poorness, gaining below \$ 1 a twenty-four hours. They are non given entree to basic comfourtss such as nutrient, H2O and mundane points. In certain <https://assignbuster.com/the-unrelenting-existence-of-the-hindu-caste-system-essay/>

rural parts, in order to forestall taint, upper caste members have banned the Dalits from pulling H<sub>2</sub>O from public Wellss. Most of them are illiterate as a consequence of the deficiency of educational chances monopolized by members of a higher caste ranking. They besides are restricted to jobs-if they were fortunate plenty to be employed-in sanitation and service. Their occupations can run from work in leather stores to the disposal of dead animate beings. In bulk of the upper caste households, the retainers are comprised of Dalits. After the retainers have cleaned the cooking utensil and suites of the house, a member of the household sprinkles ' holy ' H<sub>2</sub>O on these to sublimate what has been antecedently touched. When taking public transit, Dalits must stand at the coach halt and delay until upper caste members have entered the coach. Inside the coach, they are non allowed to sit, despite vacant seats. They are besides frequently capable to humiliation from members of the upper caste. 6 For illustration, Dalit kids who attend school are made to sit at the dorsum of the schoolroom. Worst of all, the Dalits are no aliens to mistreat ; they are prone to the worst of offenses and in fact, there were 3, 298 instances of physical force against the Dalits, 1, 034 studies of colza and 486 reported slayings in the twelvemonth 2000. These figures do non account for unreported instances.

Given such unfairnesss, some Dalits have resorted to transition to avoid their black destiny. Thousands of Dalits have converted into Buddhism and Christianity to get away the atrociousnesss they face. In their eyes, a new faith offered a new individuality based on the faith itself, instead than by caste. However, this transition has its monetary value ; change overing to another faith will intend giving up protections and privileges provided by the

Indian Constitution such as reserves in state-funded instruction and employment. Furthermore, there are n't any protections provided for converts who are discriminated against. The inescapability of their destiny magnifies the adversity they face.

Sing all this, the jobs of why the Untouchables have become a minor society are n't difficult to understand given the strong ties lifestyle, civilization and faiths have in India. This cultural truth is dry sing that India is said to be one of today ' s biggest democracies. 3

There have been many political steps taken against caste favoritism that intended to protect the rights of the Harijans.

The first act established ( with the Dalits in head ) was the Poona Pact. It stated that a reserved figure of seats in the national legislative assembly were reserved for Dalit campaigners merely, who would be elected based entirely on the ballots of their Dalit components. The Torahs established in the 1949 Indian Constitution, functioning as the model of the responsibilities of its citizens, besides strengthened the rights of the Untouchables. Article 17 declared the abolishment of ' untouchability ' and the enforcement of such was punishable by jurisprudence. Additionally, article 15 prohibited favoritism based on faith, race, caste, sex or topographic point of birth, among the discourtesies cited as signifiers of bias are the unequal entree to public topographic points and public installations such as H2O beginnings. Despite the fact that ' untouchability ' was officially banned, favoritism still dominated in India. This continuity led to the statute law of The Prevention of Atrocities Act ( 1989 ) , which " specifically made it illegal to exhibit people

naked through the streets, coerce them to eat fecal matters, take away their land, foul their H<sub>2</sub>O, interfere with their right to vote, and burn down their places. “ 3

Aside from these Torahs there are besides several organisations and constitutions that have tried to work against the force and favoritism. The United Nations, for case, upholds the commissariats in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ( UDHR ) . Similar to the Indian Constitution, Articles I & A ; II of UDHR dictate that “ all human existences are born free and equal in self-respect and rights ” and that the human rights protected in the UDHR belong to everyone “ without differentiation of any sort, such as race, colour, sex, linguistic communication, faith, national or societal beginning, belongings, birth or other position. “ 9 India, being a member of the United Nations, is bound to these commissariats. Several international development bureaus have besides aided the Dalits by funding assorted Dalit organisations concerned with community development activities. Such activities include small-scale industries and instruction ( particularly on how to take advantage of authorities development aid ) On the other manus, in the local scene, there are churches, which non merely supply instruction, but besides develop job-oriented undertakings to heighten skill development. 11 This is based on the premise that if the Dalits are knowing and have decent occupations, so their caste position rises.

Through these Torahs and assorted organisations, a figure of Dalits are able to do a base in present twenty-four hours India. Regardless of the many atrociousnesss against Harijans there are some who have managed to step out of the caste system. They have become more sceptered to repossess <https://assignbuster.com/the-unrelenting-existence-of-the-hindu-caste-system-essay/>

their rights and antheroom for better chances. Some of the Harijans have successfully found their manner into Indian political relations and have established income-generating undertakings. Furthermore, these Torahs have given the Harijans more entree to land, instruction and employment chances.

A premier illustration of a Dalit who rose above the caste system is Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the first Law Minister of India. Prior to this postion, he was elected president of the outlining commission involved in the devising of the fundamental law for the independent India. One of his greatest parts was the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State in the Indian Constitution, which discussed freedom, equality, the abolishment of untouchability, and the enforcement of rights.

Unfortunately, the general conditions of the Harijans have non changed. Most of these Torahs have finally failed due to the deficiency of proper and efficient execution and the stigma that continues to linger in the heads of most Indians. Because the constabulary and authorities functionaries frequently support the caste system, many offenses go unreported or unpunished due to bullying, reprisal, or entire inactivity. Not merely do they transfuse fright, but they are besides given more chances to pull strings their power. As Smita Narula, research worker for the Asia division of Human Rights Watch, would set it, " There have been large-scale maltreatments by the constabulary, moving in collusion with upper castes, including foraiies, whippings in detention, failure to bear down wrongdoers or investigate reported offenses. " 5 For case, rural Dalits faced political related force from

hawkish groups like the Ranvir Sena who have massacred more than 400 Dalit villagers in Bihar between 1995 and 1999.

To do affairs worse, in 2003, it was estimated that caste based force increased by 25-30 % . 5 Ironically, force occurs without true aggravation, one may be tortured or murdered for picking flowers or merely walking through the street of a higher caste. Women and immature miss are normally the targeted victims of caste force. They are forced to go cocottes for those of higher castes. This forced harlotry is disguised under a spiritual pattern called Devadasis ( literally translated as “ female retainer of God ” ) . Originally, Devadasis is considered to be to be the sacred responsibility of a Dalit household to give their prized ownership to the deity. 7 However, over the class of clip, it has evolved into a pecuniary system. Finally, after their “ service ” to the upper-castes, these adult females are sold to brothels. 3 The sarcasm of this circumstance is that most of the clip the pattern of Devadasis is encouraged by the adult female ‘ s or miss ‘ s household. There are times when the adult females or miss are cognizant of the state of affairs, but more frequently than non, they are kept in the dark about these secret ‘ businesses. ‘ Because they live in poorness, the best ownership they have are there girls. In add-on to this, landlords and constabularies sexually abuse or assault adult females to learn political lessons and to oppress dissent within a community. 5 There have even been instances wherein adult females have been arrested and tortured as a signifier of penalty to their male relations. A clear illustration of this is the narrative of a 42 year-old adult female who was gang-raped and burned alive after being held in



imprisonment and tortured for eight days. 3 Her supposed ' crime ' was that her boy eloped with the girl of an upper caste household.

As a whole, these Acts of the Apostles are not merely major misdemeanors of human rights, but are the things that maintain the rigidity of the caste system.

Another ground why caste favoritism still exists is the hierarchy nowadays among the Dalits. The Harijans have divided themselves harmonizing to sub-castes that by and large indicate their profession. The dairy farmers, tobacco-curers and Barbers by and large take higher rankings, while the sweepers and weavers are at the underside. Dalits of greater societal position are besides granted with better instruction and chances.

The mentality behind the struggle among the Dalits is similar to the 1 integrated by the Brahmins. The monopolisation of goods and services, unequal intervention and segregation exist because the caste system has become an ideological societal concept, and it can be assumed that it has allowed some Dalits to bask more chances at the disbursement of others.

Another factor lending to caste favoritism is the application of the caste system in mundane activities such as feeding, wherein members of a higher ranking prefer not to eat nutrient made by those of a lower standing, while those at the underside freely eat nutrient made by anyone. The ground behind this behaviour is the aforesaid construct of taint that occurs by tying one ' s ego with that of a lower caste. This mentality is besides apparent during marriages, such as nuptials, in which members of the same rank or division are jointly grouped. 21

<https://assignbuster.com/the-unrelenting-existence-of-the-hindu-caste-system-essay/>

The force against these persons has to halt non merely because of grounds that contradict the political theory that India is now standing upon, democracy, but besides because these persons serve a intent. Their work involves occupations that may be considered impure, but they are besides occupations that no 1 else in society would wish to make. Harmonizing to Herbert Gans and article theory on the " Functions of Poverty " , which can be applied to the state of affairs of the Harijans if India, they are a necessary portion of society. They serve an built-in intent in making the occupations that are unwanted and need non be maltreated or demolished for functioning such intents which in bend help the society they live in economically.

A cogent evidence of a Dalit ' s indispensableness in Indian society is his function as a funeral drummer. The membranophones used for this intent are made out of cow tegument, a stuff frequently avoided by member of the upper castes due to its dross ; hence restricting the usage of the instrument to the Harijans. Although the Dalits have protested against such a undertaking because they feel that it reinforces their lower status, members of the upper caste continually bargain with them, frequently offering " more money and more rice, " to execute funeral drumming. This is merely one of the many undertakings that upper caste members are dependent on the Dalits on and thereby proves that despite their lowly position, Indian society is dependent on them.

Despite this, India ' s Harijans have long been the topic of maltreatment and ill-treatment because of their exclusion in the Hindu caste system. It is

impossible how the members of a faith that upholds kindness and decency have allowed such an atrociousness to happen.

It must be pointed out that the Hindu caste system was non established with the purpose to promote caste favoritism. If this were the instance, Hinduism would non recommend the rule of good karma. The caste system is a manner of life that determines how Hindus must work in, and together with others in society. But someday, the context of the Hindu caste system went amiss and the Harijans were deemed impure unlike the remainder. As outcastes, they are cold to the eyes of others and are denied of many privileges.

Given the state of affairs, it is besides questionable how India considers itself a functional democracy because of its failure to allow constitutional privileges and protect the human rights of its most underprivileged citizens. The Indian authorities functionaries and constabularies, who are supposed to be leaders and defenders of the state, contribute to the ever-widening spread through the hapless execution of the Torahs and Acts of the Apostless. Additionally, Indian citizens besides contribute to caste favoritism by neglecting to continue these statute laws and demoing compassion for their fellow countrymen. Alternatively of lending to the solution, both sides are delving a deeper, hole. With this, who left are to assist the Untouchables?

The chief concern of many foreigners who look into the lives of Harijans is the stigma attached to the Untouchables. This stigma has remained because of many cultural ties and hints of similar happenings seen in many other

civilizations, like the Baraku in Japan who are besides deemed as impure. Furthermore, the Harijans have divided themselves into farther sub-castes. Their pattern of know aparting others has contributed to the thought that a caste system must and presently exists.

In the Philippines, though a correspondence may non needfully be observed, there is a clear division between societal categories. The hapless, in-between category and the rich are non known to tie in themselves with each other yet each is built-in for society to map. Furthermore, the upper categories are known to monopolise the state ' s most moneymaking industries ; a form seen in many developing states. This attitude contributes to the disparity among societal categories by clearly specifying the economic group where one belongs.

Given that caste-based favoritism is an ideological concept that benefits those at the top ranks, it may be impossible to of all time eliminate it. Surely, those who benefit from the system would ne'er desire to extinguish it since it gives them the opportunity to command and capitalise India ' s resources. 26 A clear illustration of is the inexpensive labour provided by the Dalits. Some upper caste employers have used the caste system as an alibi and as a agency of covering up exploitative economic agreements with these people.

9

The distribution of more educational, economical and employment chances to the Harijans may assist, but merely to a certain extent. Such privileges can be withdrawn through force and immoral Acts of the Apostless by powerful forces. The presence of a self-serving member of society can ne'er

be eradicated, and therefore a battle over control and resources is inevitable.

Simply put, all attempts to get rid of caste-based favoritism will be futile. Although Torahs, extra privileges and allocations can better the Harijans ' life conditions, there is no denying that unfairness will still happen. It is because every bit long as anyone in society believes that he belongs in a certain societal standing, there will ever be an untouchable.